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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTING INCIDENT, U.S.
FOREIGN POLICY, U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies continued to focus April 20 news coverage on the Virginia Tech shooting incident and its aftermath; on the 2008 presidential elections; and on other local issues. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-unification "United Daily News" reflected on the Virginia Tech shooting incident and said ethnic issue will probably be the most profound impact generated by this incident. A column in the pro-status quo "China Times," discussed the State Department's strategic plan for 2007-2012 and said the United States' diplomacy in the near future will "continue to focus on intervening with other countries' internal affairs and promoting U.S.-style democracy." An op-ed piece in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" discussed the United States' "one China" policy and said it is about time that Taiwan's national leaders say no to the U.S.' "one China" policy. End summary.

2. Virginia Tech Shooting Incident

"Lament and Reflections over the U.S. Campus Shooting Incident"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (4/20):

"A campus shooting incident happened in Virginia, in which 32 innocent teachers and students lost their lives in dorms and classrooms, and the gunman himself also committed suicide. This tragedy has not only exposed the problem of lenient gun control [laws] in the United States but has, given the fact that the gunman is a resident alien from South Korea, also stirred up already sensitive ethnic sentiments in U.S. society. ...

"Perhaps the most profound impact generated by the Virginia Tech shooting incident is the ethnic issue. To put it fairly, this incident cannot be categorized as one caused by ethnic clashes, and many of the previous shooting incidents on the U.S. campus were also unrelated to the ethnic or racial background of the shooters. But unfortunately, this violent campus shooting incident - the worst in U.S. history - was committed by a student from South Korea, and it has thus inevitably touched the deepest and most sensitive ethnic nerve in all people. ...

"For a long time Taiwan and its people have been troubled by ethnic issues ignited by its politicians. When traveling overseas, Taiwan people, as well as mainland Chinese people, or even Asians in general, may have all experienced discriminatory treatment caused by the western world's worries about the 'yellow peril.' If the Virginia Tech shooting incident triggers ethnic antagonism in the United States again, all overseas Chinese people will be caught up in the storm against Asian people. It will be another difficult subject [for all] as to how to help different ethnic groups to work on their tolerance and empathy."

13. U.S. Foreign Policy

"The United States' Future Diplomatic Strategy Will Continue to be Interventionism"

The "International Outlook" column in the pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] wrote (4/20):

"The U.S. State Department has [recently] published its strategic plan for 2007-2012. In the beginning of this report, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice quoted President George W. Bush as saying 'It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.' Rice believes that to achieve this bold vision, America needs equally bold diplomacy, and such diplomacy is aimed at changing the world itself and not simply describing the current status of the world.

"Such [an objective] indicated that at least during Bush's term of office, U.S. diplomacy will continue to focus on intervening in other countries' internal affairs and promoting U.S.-style democracy. The 'testing ground' of Iraq, however, dealt a ruthless blow to this trend in diplomacy. What kind of a democracy has the United States established in Iraq over the past four years? ... Why is it that some Iraqi people still miss Saddam Hussein? This is because even though Saddam Hussein was an authoritarian, he had at least created a certain extent of unity and stability for his nation, and his people were not living in misery. But what about now? Politics in Iraq can be regarded as democratic now, but the entire country is deeply caught in chaos, and internal turmoil has made this country lose its hopes and objectives.

"This 'interventionism' of the United States, which 'denies a country its sovereignty,' has never worked; instead, the situation always gets worse the deeper [the United States] intervenes. Bush has carried out two interventions [during his term] - namely, FOREIGN POLICY, U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Afghanistan and Iraq, and how these countries will turn out in the end is obvious to all. If Washington continues to use American values to intervene with other countries in the future, the consequences will be even worse."

14. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

"Time to Say No to US' 'One China'"

Michael Lin, a political commentator based in Taipei, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (4/20):

"The US government has made it clear that it will not back Taiwan's plan to apply for WHO membership under the name 'Taiwan.' On the diplomatic front, the major obstacle facing Taiwan is the US' adherence to the 'one China' policy. ... I believe that Taiwan's diplomatic strategy towards the US should stress its core values and adhere to the principles of reciprocity and coexistence in urging the US to revise its outdated 'one China' policy, while letting the US understand that whatever Taiwan does will benefit the US. ...

"Taiwan should then take aim at Washington's cross-strait policy and Taiwan's democracy. First, the objective of US cross-strait policy is to help the two sides of the Taiwan Strait to settle their differences peacefully. However, Beijing is making every effort to block Taiwan in the international arena. If the US does not want to adjust its 'one China' policy and help Taiwan join important international organizations, there will be no room for cross-strait negotiations on an equal footing. Second, the circumstances when the US first formulated its 'one China' policy were very different from today's growing Taiwan consciousness. By adopting a policy that obscures Taiwan's sovereignty, the US will not be able to help Taipei and Beijing settle their differences. Third, the US' China-leaning cross-strait policy has not only violated the basic rights of the citizens of Taiwan to pursue their freedom, democracy and happiness, but it has also violated the founding spirit of the US and the administration of US President George W. Bush's policy of seeking global democratization.

"Faced with a difficult situation, Taiwan must make good use of its resources, construct a discourse that best tallies with US interests and come up with a strategy aimed at closing the gap between ideals and reality. Only by doing so can we bring the international community to recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state and eventually join the WHO and the UN. Therefore, it is about time that our national leaders said no to the US' 'one China' policy."

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